



NEWS RELEASE

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests & Thunder Basin National Grassland

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Beetle-kill tree removal will close some campgrounds

(Laramie, Wyo., July 28, 2009) – The Laramie Ranger District will be closing a few campgrounds and picnic areas while crews cut down and remove trees killed by the Mountain Pine Beetle. The dead trees are a safety concern as they can fall without warning.

“The safety of people visiting our developed campgrounds and picnic grounds is always a concern,” said District Ranger Larry Sandoval, Jr. “Every year we remove hazardous trees before opening our developed facilities to the public. After reassessing conditions this year, however, we realized that even more trees would need to be removed in certain areas. Consequently, we’ll be closing, or partially closing, a few of our facilities while the hazardous trees are being cut and removed.”

Effective immediately, the Pelton Creek, Aspen, and Miller Lake Campgrounds will be closed. Access to the Douglas Creek and Platte Ridge Trailheads will still be available at the Pelton Creek Campground. The Fir Picnic Ground will also be closed. Although there is no way to physically close the Barber Lake Picnic Ground, the Forest Service strongly recommends that people avoid this area as well.

In addition to these scheduled closures, crews will be out assessing individual camp and picnic sites to determine if they also need to be treated. If necessary, temporary closures will be posted at these specific sites while the trees are removed. “We hope to keep all our facilities open to the public, but not at the expense of their safety. When we need to cut a tree or several out of one area, we will do so as quickly as possible so as to not disrupt the recreating public. Crews will be working diligently to remove the dead trees. We will reopen these facilities only when it is safe for people to be there,” Sandoval said.

Please visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/recreation/camping/> for the current status of campgrounds in the Rocky Mountain Region.

Even though hazards are reduced when identified trees are removed from a site, recreationists should always be vigilant while in the woods, especially when the wind picks up

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and weakened trees could be falling. For general information about the bark beetle go to www.fs.fed.us/r2/bark-beetle

For more information about the Laramie Ranger District, please call 307-745-2300.

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